

What's up with LCU-1680?



Wow - talk about needing a good Spring cleaning! LCU-1680 is currently finishing up a planned overhaul period at Davis Boatworks in Norfolk, VA. Following some additional work at Little Creek, the craft will transit back to Buffalo, and is expected to arrive at NMCRC Buffalo around June 18.

Photo by BM2 Gregory Lowery

Anyone who is familiar with the area around the Buffalo Reserve Center knows that something is missing. When you walk out behind the CPO Club in back of the Center, there is nothing but a long empty concrete pier, with the bare bollards waiting to receive mooring lines.

The pier's regular occupant, LCU-1680, has been gone for the entire winter, undergoing an extensive overhaul at Davis Boatworks, in Norfolk, VA. The overhaul is being used to complete several required work projects, (called BOATALTS, for "boat alterations"), along with a number of jobs submitted by the Center and unit.

LCU-1680, which is maintained and operated by Assault Craft Unit Two DET 205, is undergoing a number of major engineering works. The screws (which are commonly referred to as "propellers" by civilians) have been replaced by a set with a slightly different pitch. Some modifications are being performed on the engine room ventilation system, and the fuel and fresh water tanks are also being reworked.

The fuel system will receive a new

filtering configuration that will provide each engine with its own knife edge strainer and water separator, which should increase the filtering efficiency of each engine. Additionally, the air conditioning system will be completely overhauled with a new compressor, along with other components that should make life onboard the craft much more comfortable for many years. The new system is fitted with the latest in environmentally-friendly refrigerants, R-134A, in response to the call to replace ozone in new A/C systems.

In addition to the engineering work performed at Davis, a number of other deck and habitability jobs are also underway. The hull of the craft has been cleaned, and the deck scuttles have been reconfigured to stop water from dripping into the berthing compartments (and other spaces) whenever water is present on deck. Nothing like getting rained on when you're trying to get some shuteye!

Other work is being performed in the craft's galley, where new cabinet doors are being fashioned to keep the pots and pans from getting underway every time the craft hits rough seas. New refrigerators and

freezers will replace the old ones, which had started deteriorating over the years.

Once the craft is finished at Davis Boatworks, it will be towed to Assault Craft Unit Two at NAB Little Creek. There, it will undergo some extensive engine overhauls. It will also receive some new communications gear to allow more reliable and longer range communications.

Members of the Buffalo ACU-2 unit will be preparing the craft for the transit home throughout the month of May. The crew tasked with bringing the craft home will head down to Little Creek during the first week in June, and hope to start the long and uneventful trip back to Buffalo shortly thereafter.

The summer schedule for LCU-1680 will be a busy one, with numerous deployments across the Great Lakes. Both the craft and the crew are ready following the winter layover, and are looking forward to a successful operating season.